

Problems finally addressed

Written by Administrator

Monday, 15 September 2008 13:46 -

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During the beginning of this century, some attention was brought at last to the Burns Paiute Tribe. A Cherokee Indian came to visit the tribe during a hard winter in 1923. He must have taken word of the desperate conditions under which the tribe was living to the proper authority, for the following spring a superintendent from the Warm Springs Agency came to Burns. Soon after, army tents were brought in and set up where the Burns Cemetery is now located. In 1928, the local Egan Land Company gave the Burns Paiute 10 acres of land just outside the city of Burns. The land was the old city dump which the Indians cleaned and drilled a well to make ready for the houses. Twenty two-room homes, a small school and a community center were built by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. A small church was built by the local Catholic Church in 1932. The school, church and community center were moved to the new reservation after it was established.

Schooling was a problem for the tribe. The public school for many years would not accept Indian students for health reasons since many children had tuberculosis and trachoma. A school opened on the reservation in 1934. However, some families continued to send their children to boarding schools far from home on reservations such as Fort Bidwell Indian School, Fort Bidwell, California. Health care for the Indians did improve and in 1949 Burns' public schools were finally opened to the Indian children.

Christianity is Introduced

Father Heuel, a Catholic priest, who was the first to meet the spiritual needs of the tribe, came to the area